

## LESSON 11



# CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

JUNE 10 2023

## get over yourself!

**Scripture Story:** Numbers 13; 14.

**Commentary:** *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 34 and 36.

### PREPARING TO TEACH

#### I. SYNOPSIS

This lesson deals with the story of the 12 spies sent to explore the land of Canaan and bring back a report. They reported the land as being a good land, filled with abundance. But the KJV says that the men “brought up an evil report” of the land. What made it evil wasn’t what they said as much as how they said it. They were terrified by the strength of the inhabitants and their cities. And so ten of the spies doubted God’s ability to lead Israel into this land. Only two spies, Caleb and Joshua, encouraged the people to put their trust in God and move forward.

This story has a powerful lesson to teach about dealing with fear. Fear is a reality, and almost all young people experience it. But God understands our human tendency to fear. Maybe that’s why He has placed about 365 promises in Scripture to deal with fear, one for every day of the year! But fear doesn’t have to control our lives. Faith in God is based on seeing what God is able to do in our lives and the lives of others. The more we exercise faith, the less we are captive to fear.

#### II. TARGET

The students will:

- Learn that Caleb and Joshua trusted God to help Israel conquer the land of Canaan. (*Know*)
- Experience God’s power to help them cope with fear. (*Feel*)

- Trust God to help them through challenging situations. (*Respond*)

#### III. EXPLORE

##### The Holy Scriptures, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, No. 1

“The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration. The inspired authors spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to humanity the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God’s acts in history” (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20, 21).

### TEACHING

#### I. GETTING STARTED

##### Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Use the following list of unusual phobias to open a discussion on fear.

- Alliumphobia—Fear of garlic
- Bibliophobia—Fear of books
- Chiraptophobia—Fear of being touched
- Ergophobia—Fear of work

Hippophobia—Fear of horses  
 Neophobia—Fear of anything new  
 Ranidaphobia—Fear of frogs  
 Triskaidekaphobia—Fear of the number 13

Ask each student to share something they're afraid of and make up a name for that "phobia." If someone shares a more serious fear, use that as an opportunity to shift to a more serious discussion on the topic of fear.

### **Illustration**

*Share this illustration in your own words:*

Two explorers were on a jungle safari when suddenly a ferocious lion jumped in front of them. "Keep calm," the first explorer whispered. "Remember what we read in that book on wild animals? If you stand perfectly still and look the lion in the eye, he will turn and run."

"Sure," replied his companion. "You've read the book, and I've read the book. But has the lion read the book?"

Sometimes we know all the "good advice" for dealing with a frightening situation. But when the real thing hits, the advice can seem pretty distant and unreal! That's what happened to the children of Israel in this week's story. They knew that God had promised to give them the land of Canaan, but when they actually saw the land and the dangers it contained, faith melted and fear took over. Just "reading the book" wasn't enough!

## **II. TEACHING THE STORY**

### **Bridge to the Story**

*Share the following in your own words:*

We all have fears. Some may be irrational; others are perfectly rational. It's normal to be afraid of facing a new situation, or trying a task that may be difficult for you. Almost everyone feels fear when writing an exam, taking a driving test, performing in public, asking someone out on a date, starting a new job. We experience deeper fears, too: the fear of sickness and death, either for ourselves or someone we love; the fear of family breakup and change; the fear of loneliness and rejection.

God's Word never promises that we won't be afraid. It's a scary world out there. But almost every time one of God's angel messengers appears to

someone in Scripture, they appear with the message: "Fear not! Don't be afraid!" God doesn't want us to be captives to fear. God empowers us to conquer fear and move forward in faith.

### **Out of the Story for Teachers**

*After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

Divide students into groups of four or five. If you have some who know their Bibles better than others, make sure they are distributed throughout the different groups. Ask each group to find an example of a Bible story in which God helps His people win a victory in an unexpected way. (Some sample answers might be: crossing the Red Sea, breaking down the walls of Jericho, etc.) Ask each small group to come back and share their story with the whole group. For each story, ask:

- What does this tell us about God's power?
- How could experiencing, or hearing about, this event build your faith?
- Does God help His people in this way today?

After discussing all the stories, return to the story of the 12 spies. Point out that Caleb and Joshua had faith that God could work mighty miracles to defend His people because they knew He had done so in the past. Ask:

- Out of 12 spies, why do you think only two had this kind of faith in God's power? What might have made Caleb and Joshua different?
- What kinds of frightening situations do we face in our lives that might make it hard to trust God?
- How can we build greater faith in God's power in our own lives?

### **Sharing Context and Background**

*Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.*

At the time that Moses sent the 12 spies into Canaan, the Israelites had already witnessed many mighty demonstrations of God's power. They had seen:

- Their miraculous deliverance from slavery, accompanied by the 10 plagues on Egypt (Exodus 5–12).
- The parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 13–15).
- Manna provided for them to eat (Exodus 16).
- Water miraculously flowing from a rock (Exodus 17).



### Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

#### Arts and Crafts

Although many young people in youth Sabbath School feel that they've left "arts and crafts" behind forever in primary or junior class, students have a variety of learning styles. Incorporating the occasional hands-on art project into your lesson can make it real for students who learn best by doing. For this lesson, you might distribute poster board and have students work in pairs or groups to create a poster based around this week's story or key text. Students could write, draw, or make a collage using images cut from magazines. Hang up the posters around the classroom as a reminder of this week's lesson.

RABBI 101

- The defeat of the Amalekites (Exodus 17).
- The Ten Commandments given directly from God on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20).

How were people who had seen so many miracles so easily convinced to lose faith and give up? Because they allowed fear to be more powerful than faith. They focused on the threat that faced them—the fierce, warlike people of Canaan with their fortified cities—rather than on the things God had done for them.

The same thing can happen to us as we focus on our problems instead of God's power. Like the Israelites, we can draw on evidence of what God has done in the past to assure us that He's always going to be there for us, no matter what the future holds!

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 196).

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "faith" as an "allegiance" or "duty." It also defines "trust" as "assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something." With these two separate words, we have a brief summary of exactly just how we are to put ourselves in the hands of our Creator. We are told numerous times in the Bible to never fear, but to put our hope, trust, and faith in the One who gave us life. Psalm 9:10 says plainly: "And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; for You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You" (NKJV).

"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Psalm 34:4, NKJV).

The Israelites, no matter how many times rescued from calamity, seemed not to grasp these simple concepts or apply them to their lives. How can we apply these verses to our daily routines?

cornerstoneconnections

### Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson. Invite students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Key Text**

Invite the students to share the Key Text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Flashlight**

Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from *Out of the Story*.

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that spoke most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.

- **Further Insight**

Ask them how the quote in Further Insight conveys the point of the story in this lesson.

### III. CLOSING

#### **Activity**

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Distribute paper and pencils to each student. Ask each person to write down a situation they're worried about or afraid of in their own lives. Then ask them to fold the paper without showing it to anyone, and hold on to it during prayer time. As you pray, ask God to demonstrate His power in dealing with each situation the students have written about. Ask Him to build the students' faith so that they, like Caleb and Joshua, can trust Him in difficult situations.

#### **Summary**

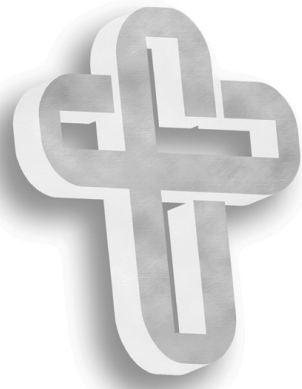
Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Fear is a reality we all face. It's a normal, even healthy, reaction to frightening situations. But fear can put roadblocks in our way if we don't learn to move past it. The most powerful weapon we have for conquering fear is trust in God. When we know that God cares for us and is able to help us, then we can take a step of faith even in a frightening situation.

The great thing about faith is that it can be as small as a tiny seed (Matthew 17:20). If we start to use it, it will grow. Even a little courage and faith can be enough to get us started in dealing with a frightening situation. When we see how God leads us, we'll be empowered to go further and do more!



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 34 and 36.



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## STUDENT LESSON

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### get over yourself!



Photo by Natalie Wegh

### flashlight

“Hope and courage gave place to cowardly despair, as the spies uttered the sentiments of their unbelieving hearts, which were filled with discouragement prompted by Satan. Their unbelief cast a gloomy shadow over the congregation, and the mighty power of God, so often manifested in behalf of the chosen nation, was forgotten. The people did not wait to reflect; they did not reason that He who had brought them thus far would certainly give them the land” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 388).

### keytext

“If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid. . . . Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us.”

**(Numbers 14:8, 9, NIV)**

# what do you think?

What scares you? Write "A" for Agree or "D" for Disagree next to each of the following statements.

- I think of myself as a brave person.
- I'm scared of lots of things.
- I think I handle fear well.
- Fear holds me back from doing some things I'd like to do.
- I'm afraid of new or unfamiliar situations.
- Trusting God helps me when I'm scared.

## did you know?

**T**he Israelite spies in this week's lesson experienced normal fear in the face of a very real threat. But they didn't have to remain at the mercy of fear. Fear is real, but so is God's power to help us overcome it. Besides, they already had God's promise to send terror and confusion among their enemies, to make them turn their backs and run, to send hornets to drive them out (Exodus 23:27, 28).

This was not cruel or unloving on the part of God. The Canaanites had learned about God while Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had lived among them. God gave them 400 more years, while the Israelites were in slavery in Egypt, to turn away from their abominable ways and toward Him. When they would not, God had to evict them from the land of Canaan, which He had promised to Abraham's descendants. They would not have been safe neighbors for His people.

## INTO THE STORY

**"The LORD said to Moses, 'Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.'**

**"So at the LORD's command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran."**

**"When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, 'Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad?'"**

**"They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land.**

They gave Moses this account: 'We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large.'

"Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, 'We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.'

"But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.'

"That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, 'If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness!'"

"Then Moses and Aaron fell facedown in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly, 'The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.'

(Numbers 13:1, 2, 17-19, 26-28, 30, 31; 14:1, 2, 5-9, NIV)





# OUT OF THE STORY

Why do you think God told Moses to send out an exploration party to look over the land of Canaan?

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What impressed most of the explorers about Canaan? What were they afraid of?

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How was Caleb and Joshua's attitude to the new land different from the attitude of the other men?

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Why do you think Caleb and Joshua reacted differently?

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When you face fear in your life, are you more like Caleb and Joshua, or more like the other 10 spies?

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What can you learn from this passage that might help you deal with frightening situations in your own life?

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## punch lines

**"So do not fear,** for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10, NIV).

**"Be strong and courageous.** Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6, NIV).

**"The wicked flee** though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1, NIV).

**"Be on your guard;** stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong" (1 Corinthians 16:13, NIV).

**"There is no fear** in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18, NIV).

**"For God has not** given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV).

## further insight

**"When we seem to doubt God's love and distrust His promises we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. . . .**

**". . . Let us keep fresh in our memory all the tender mercies that God has shown us,—the tears He has wiped away, the pains He has soothed, the anxieties removed, the fears dispelled, the wants supplied, the blessings bestowed,—thus strengthening ourselves for all that is before us through the remainder of our pilgrimage."**—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*,

pp. 118, 125.

# connectingtolife

## Sabbath

Read Isaiah 41:10.

The *What Do You Think?* section of the lesson asks some questions about fear. As you answer those questions, think about fear in your own life. Does fear hold you back? Does it push you forward? How do you cope with it?

Ask some of your family and friends what their worst fear is. Do you see some common threads? Do adults seem to fear different things than teenagers do? What's your worst fear?

Finish the sentences below:

When I'm afraid, I find it helps to \_\_\_\_\_.

I'd never be afraid if I knew that \_\_\_\_\_.

Even though I was afraid, I \_\_\_\_\_.

## Sunday

Read the story of the 12 spies who went into Canaan (Numbers 13 and 14) and respond to the study questions given in your lesson. Why do you think this story is in the Bible? As you reflect on it, what do you think is the message God has for you today? What aspect of the story speaks to your life?

## Monday

Read Numbers 14:8, 9.

Caleb and Joshua responded to the fears of the other spies by saying, "If God wants us in this land, then God will take care of all the obstacles."

Think about a situation in your life that scares you. How could this same attitude help you? Rewrite the *Key Text* in your own words in a way that speaks directly to your situation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday

Read 2 Timothy 1:7.

Read the *Flashlight* section. When we allow fear and discouragement to overwhelm us, it's often because we've forgotten God's power and the great things He has done in the past. What experiences have you had in your life that you can look back on to give you faith and courage when times get tough?

If you don't feel you've really experienced God's power in your life, talk to some people—both adults and people your own age—who seem to have a strong faith in God. Ask what faith-building experiences they've had. How do those experiences help them when they face frightening situations?

## Wednesday

All the Bible verses in the *Punch Lines* section of the lesson remind us that Christians don't have to be controlled by fear. Choose one of those verses that you find most encouraging. Copy it out on a card or bookmark and decorate it with drawings or stickers. Keep it someplace where you'll see it often and use it as a reminder that even though you may face difficult or challenging situations, you can have courage because God is always with you!

## Thursday

Read 1 Corinthians 16:13.

The Israelites faced a real threat—a land filled with dangerous enemies. Yet 10 of the spies saw an obstacle, while two saw an opportunity. Caleb and Joshua didn't deny that there were enemies to be conquered in Canaan. But because of their faith, they saw the situation through a different perspective.

What situations in your life frighten you? How could faith change your perspective? Think about a particular fear that bothers you. If you were seeing this situation in a "Caleb and Joshua" way, how would you look at it? Use the space below to write how your attitude would change if you looked at your fear differently:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Friday

Read Psalm 111:10, Revelation 14:7, Luke 12:4, Proverbs 14:27.

There's nothing wrong with being afraid. It can be a normal, healthy reaction to a threatening situation. The problem comes when we let fear paralyze us and keep us from doing the right thing. Courage means overcoming that kind of fear, doing what's right even though we're afraid.

According to the Bible, there's a flip side to fear. Some kinds of fear are helpful. Numerous Bible texts tell us to "fear God," in terms of having awe and respect for His power. We should also fear the consequences of sin. Sometimes a healthy fear can hold us back from doing risky, dangerous, or self-destructive things. Think about how fear can play a positive role in your life. How can you distinguish between a healthy fear that keeps you safe, and fear that holds you back from the things you should be doing? Ask for God's guidance and discernment as you deal with fear in your life.

## this week's reading\*

*Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 34 and 36.

\**Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at [www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rB09s](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rB09s). By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.